Non-Budgetary Support to Public Sector Fertilizer Companies

476. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether non-Budgetary support to public sector fertilizer companies was extended on the premise that it was cheaper to produce fertilizer, as compared to the cost of importing the same;

(b) whether on this basis Government contemplate to shut down all fertilizer units in the country, in view of the present international price of Urea; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and if not, how such presumption was made by the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) to (c) Considering the gap between the demand and domestic production and the then prevailing high costs of import, non-plan budgetary support was stepped up to Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation and Fertilizer Corporation of India to supplement domestic production.

The Government has no intention of closing down public sector units which are otherwise viable in the context of falling import prices. However, the extent of the non-plan budgetary support to these two public sector companies which stand referred to the BIFR needs to be reviewed in the context of the deteriorating health of their plants, the heavy investments required for their maintenance, budgetary constraints and continuing fall in urea prices in the international market.

Violation of Jute Packaging by Materials Act

477. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that majority of the fertilizer units are violating the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory use in Packaging Commodities) Act, 1987 making it mandatory to use Laminated Jute bags for packing 50% of their product; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what steps are being taken to see that the order is implemented by all the fertilizer units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR. A.K. PATEL): (a) and (b) Most of the fertilizer units are packing 50% or close to 50% of their production of Urea in jute bags as per stipulation of the order.

Appropriate measures have been taken from time to time by the Jute Commissioner's Office. These measures include, constant monitoring of the utilization of jute bags by Urea Manufacturing units by directing them to submit information in the prescribed format, undertaking field visit to check up the companies registers, stock of bags, reconcile the information submitted by them with their registers' records, issuing show cause notices to erring units. As a result of these continuous follow up measures, the overall performance of the fertilzier sector in using jute bags for packing urea has considerably improved.

उर्वरकों पर राज-सहायता समाप्त करना

478. **श्री डी.पी. यादव :** क्या रसायन और उर्वरक मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) वर्ष 1997-98 के अंत तक, प्रमुख उर्वरक संयंत्रों द्वारा कितनी मात्रा में उर्वरकों का उत्पादन किया गया तथा यह मात्रा गत वर्ष की मात्रा की तुलना में अधिक है,